



Minnesota Board on Aging
PO Box 64976
St. Paul, MN 55164-0976

March 30, 2023

Re: SF 2934

Dear Senators:

On behalf of the Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA), I am writing to ask for your support of the Senate's Human Services Budget Omnibus (SF 2934) and its appropriation for the Office of Ombudsman for Long Term Care (OOLTC). The OOLTC program provides vital support to residents of assisted living and skilled nursing facilities and their families by investigating complaints, providing education, and advocating for systemic changes for those most vulnerable and lacking vital protections.

Specifically, this appropriation would address service gaps by allowing the OOLTC to hire an additional 17 FTEs, including 10 regional ombudsman positions. Currently, the average resident-to-staff ratio for long-term care ombudsman programs nationwide is 2000:1. However in Minnesota, the current resident-to-staff ratio is 6625:1 and the increased funding would lower it to 4732:1, which would still be far below the national average.

In addition, between 2021 to 2022 complaints across all categories of resident rights rose by 16%, complaints about care problems rose 30%, and complaints about contract and service terminations, evictions, and refusals to readmit from hospital increased by 96%. Therefore, it is of critical importance that the OOLTC be adequately staffed to address the needs of older Minnesotans residing in licensed facilities throughout the state.

As Minnesota's State Unit on Aging, the MBA promotes policies to the state legislature, the Governor and state agencies that accurately reflect the needs and interests of older Minnesotans. The MBA also advises on and coordinates government plans around aging to ensure that Older American's Act requirements are met, while also working to create a collective vision that represents the best interests of older Minnesotans

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Maureen Schneider'.

Maureen Schneider
Interim Chair, Minnesota Board on Aging

Equal Opportunity Employer